(vi) There should be no requirement for change of the receiving set, irrespective of whether the consumer chooses to watch "Free-to-Air" channels and/or 'Pay' channels.

(c) and (d) The recommendations of the Task Force have, generally been accepted by the Government and amendment to the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 is under consideration.

DTH digital satellite broadcasting service

4877. DR. T. SUBBA RAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All India Radio will be launching its Direct-To-Home digital satellite broadcasting service;

(b) if so, whether the 24 hour satellite broadcast channel will beam programmes to the Indian sub-continent as also to the entire South-East Asian Region;

(c) if so, to what extent the new technology will improve audio quality; and

(d) to what extent this decision will help larger area to be brought under the broadcasting net?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) All India Radio has launched its Direct-to-Home digital satellite broadcasting service *w.e.f.* 27th February, 2002. The 24 hour satellite broadcast channel is currently beaming programmes to Indian sub continent as also to the entire South East Asian region through Asia Star satellite.

(c) and (d) The new technology gives improved audio quality uniformly over the entire coverage area and has helped AIR to cover the whole country in satellite mode.

National Film Awards

4878. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that last year the Jury for the 48th Film Awards had

made some specific recommendations for revising the method of judging entries for the National Film Awards of India;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon and the present status of their consideration;

(c) whether any decision has been taken to hold the next National Film Awards function for which awards are generally announced around this time of the year;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The feature film jury of the 48th National Film Awards made following recommendations as regards revising the method of judging entries:—

(i) Evolving a filtering mechanism possibly by constituting regional panels to reduce the number of films that have to be watched by the jury.

(ii) Increasing the entry fees to reduce the possibility of frivolous entries.

(iii) Viewing of all films by all members together if the number of films be reduced to a manageable size.

(iv) Making English sub-titles mandatory for all entries.

This year, for the 49th National Film Awards, the number of jury members have been increased so that each panel of the jury has to watch fewer films. Entry fees have been increased as recommended. For the present year, a preference for English sub-titled films has been indicated.

(c) to (e) The date of the 49th National Film Awards function has not been fixed yet. It is normally fixed after the Awards have been announced.

Streamlining the operations of Prasar Bharati

4879. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item